PANS Eaglet

The official newsletter of the Polish-American Numismatic Society

Volume 2, Issue 7 **July 2025**

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The Battle of Klushino: The Coin of Remembrance

By Christina Slobodnik

Along with Fourth of July celebrations in America, comes the remembrance of the great Battle of Klushino in Poland, which took place on July 4 of 1610.

The war was fought between the Poles and a combined Russo-Swedish army, but this particular battle was the major turning point of the war. This was mainly due to the winged hussars — the Polish cavalry, which were renowned for bearing feathered wings that whistled in the wind and frightened and intimidated the enemies' mounts. Not only was this battle key to Polish victory, it is also considered to be one of the greatest triumphs in Polish history.

To honor this mighty battle and victory Poland achieved, a 500 gold złotych coin in honor of the Polish commander, Stanisław Żółkiewski, was minted for the "Hetmans of the Polish Commonwealth" series. These were released by the Mint of Gdansk on June 12, 2025, with a diameter of 32mm, and weighing 31.10g.

Pictured on the obverse of the coin is Commander Żółkiewski, as shown in the picture below. On the reverse, an inscription half-circles the coin: "RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA", which translates to "REPUBLIC OF POLAND". Following the date, 2025, at the base of the coin, 500 złoty marks its face value. Within the half-circle of the words "RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA" is a beautiful Polish eagle, and Commander Żółkiewski's coat of arms and mace.

With only 1,000 of these coins minted, each in proof quality with high relief, the numismatic value far exceeds the face value of 500 złoty, which is equivalent to $137.90 USD. The coin is listed for sale under the Mint of Gdansk website for PLN 15,899.00, which equals $4,384.47 USD.

The coin, a new addition to the "Hetmans of the Polish Commonwealth" series, is considered a valuable addition to

any collection, and provides both a beautiful remembrance of the Polish victory at the Battle of Klushino, as well as Żółkiewski's bravery.

The Polish Batman; Token Honoring Charles Frank Zmuda, Air Show Performer from the Early Days of American Aviation

By Steven M. Bieda

Polonia can claim a number of illustrious individuals, particularly in the United States. One somewhat-off-the-beaten-path individual would be Charles Frank Zmuda (1914-1959) who at one time was known as the "Batman." Zmuda was from a Polish immigrant family who originally resided in Palo, Michigan. Zmuda was actually the second "Batman," following in the footsteps of his friend, Clements "Chem" Sohn (1910-1937) a son of German immigrants who originally lived in Fowler, Michigan. Both men performed for Art Davis who operated an aerial circus, known as the "Art Davis Air Show" or alternatively the "Art Davis Flying Circus," out of Lansing, Michigan, where both Zmuda and Sohn once lived. The Art Davis Air Show travelled extensively performing a daredevil act in which Sohn and later Zmuda, would wear batwings made of a canvas like material – zephyr cloth, which was mounted on steel tubes, forming a large web under each arm which was clasped to the man's hips. Another loose cloth formed a web between the man's legs which acted like a bat's tail. The costume was topped off with large googles, which, according to the imagination of the day, gave the man a bat-like appearance.

It was in this getup that the aerial daredevil would jump from a plane at a height of about 20,000 feet, and would use this apparatus to soar through the air like a bat. At about 900 feet from the ground, the daredevil would open his parachute for the final descent. If it sounds dangerous, it was, Clem Sohn was killed when his chute failed to open while performing this act at an airshow in Paris, France in 1937.

Incredibly, after this tragedy, Zmuda took up the wings, literally, and began performing in in Sohn's place. During his performing lifetime, Zmuda would clock more than 200 documented jumps. Although he was injured a number of times as batman, he survived this stage of his career, eventually giving up the daredevil lifestyle for the comparatively more sedentary life as a pilot for American Airlines flying out of Midway-Chicago.

An undated token promoting Art Davis's Air Show, Art Davis, and Charles Zmuda likely was issued in the late 1930-40's featuring a portrait of Davis on the obverse, with the inscription "SOUVENIR COIN" around the upper periphery of the token, and "ART DAVIS LANSING MICH." along the lower rim. Arthur "Art" Davis (1895-1979) was a renowned military pilot, barnstormer, stunt flyer, racer and all-around aviation expert. Among his aviation ventures, he owned and operated his own stunt flying business, the Art Davis Flying Circus.

On the token's reverse, Charles Zmuda appears, in full batman costume, wings spread. The inscription "HAPPY LANDING," appears around the upper rim, probably wishful thinking when one considers the tragedy experienced by Sohn. The abbreviated name, "CHAS. ZMUDA,"

appears under the frontal, full-body costumed portrayal of Zmuda, on the lower rim. Additional inscriptions, “MADE IN U.S.A.” appear in smaller letters to the left of the batman figure, while “GRAMMES” the name of the manufacturer, appears in smaller letters to the right. The token is made of brass and measures 25mm. It’s not an uncommon token, but like other tokens of this sort, can be challenging to find in the numismatic market place when one is looking for one. However, with patience they do show up with some regularity at token and medal shows, as well as on on-line sites such as eBay.

This interesting little piece of Americana offers a tangible artifact of a long-lost time of aerial daredevils and a simpler, bygone era, in American history. It also honors a plucky Pole from Palo, Michigan, who literally took up wings.

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Just A Little Bit More on Papal Medals Old and New

By Mark Benvenuto:

Whenever a new Pope takes the throne of St. Peter, there are a number of official and unofficial medals produced. it seems to be a tradition – or the cynical among us could claim that it is a way for someone to make money off of all of us who are collectors, or who are deeply connected with anything tangible related to the Catholic church. One of the recent issues that was created is that pictured, by former United States Mint artist Jim Licaretz.

Even though this is an attractive piece featuring the late Pope Francis, it makes me wonder if any of our members have medals of Pope John Paul II. After all, he has been the only Pope who was Polish, and his 26-year reign was the second longest of papal history.

If any members have medals of Pope John Paul II, and would like to share an image, please e-mail them to your editor. We’ll see what we can share with the membership in our next PANS Eaglet.

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Please note:

From our last two PANS Eaglets, we’ll remind folks that the Michigan Innovation Dollar coins are not being issued for circulation, but are being offered in rolls and bags on the Mint’s website, www.USMINT.gov as well as in four-coin proof and reverse proof sets, with both sets being issued later in 2025. The Release Ceremony can be viewed on YouTube at https://youtu.be/HkqcFtdJLHI; and a $100 bag of Michigan Innovation Dollars are beautiful.

► Spot prices as of 2 July. 2025

Gold:	$ 3,353.20/troy ounce
Silver:	$ 36.38/troy ounce
Copper:	$ 5.12/pound
Platinum:	$ 1,426.00/troy ounce
Palladium:	$ 1,162.00/troy ounce

$US-Złoty exchange: 3.60

Have you been able to join us on the web? Try: www.pans-club.org. Or, on Facebook? If not, please go to Facebook, find PANS, and see what events are coming up for our society.

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Once again, come to the meetings and win

Your PANS meets once a month, and is generous in raffling off one Polish coin per meeting. Why not attend a meeting, and see if you can add something to your growing collection?

Send in your finds.

Have you found any Polish coins of note, perhaps squirreled away in some dealer's stock of foreign coins? If you have found a hidden treasure, or one hiding in plain sight, e-mail Mark a photo and a brief write-up of how you came upon it. The PANS members will most likely be interested in hearing about it.

Remember folks, please pay your dues for 2025! That's $20 for the year – $30 if you'd like the PANS Eaglet mailed quarterly.

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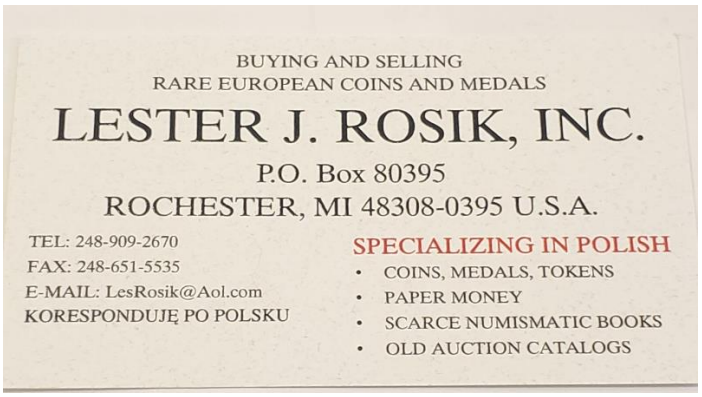

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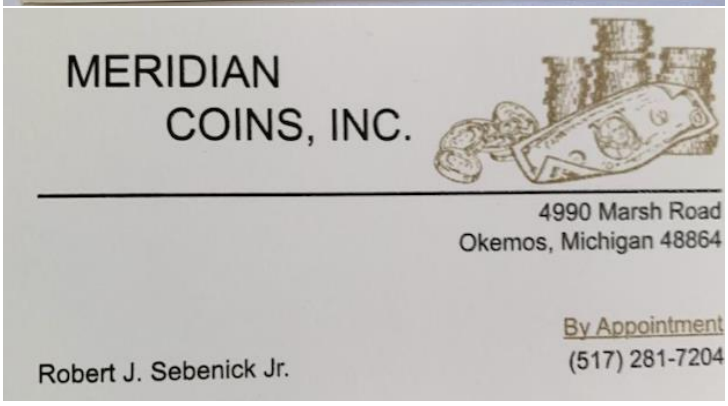

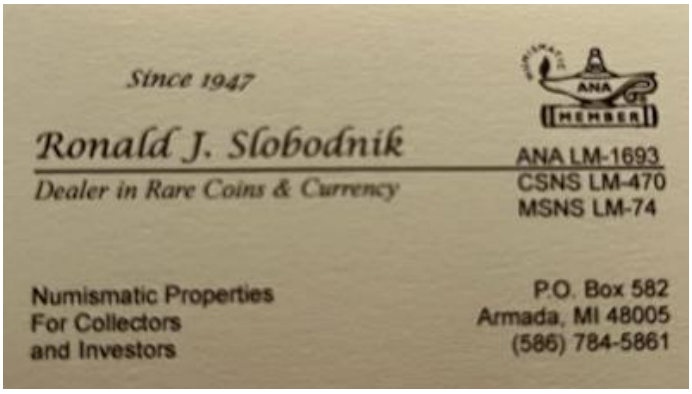

Polish-American Numismatic Society meets monthly at: American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple Rd., Troy, MI 48083

➔ Your advert here, if you wish. Please contact Mr. Les Rosik for the details.

Polish American & Huron Valley Numismatic Societies
Present Our Annual Regional Coin Show

SUMMER LOCATION

COIN SHOW

Sunday
August 24, 2025
10 am – 4 pm

Madison Place Hall

876 Horace Brown Drive
South of 13 Mile Road
Madison Heights, Michigan

FREE Admission

BUY – SELL - TRADE
COINS – PAPER MONEY
MEDALS – TOKENS – BOOKS – SUPPLIES
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pans-club.org

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hvns.org

Polish-American Numismatic Society meets monthly at: American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple Rd., Troy, MI 48083

Join Our Club

We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 12:00 PM at the American Polish Cultural Center located at 2975 East Maple Road (15 Mile Road) at Dequindre Road in Troy, Michigan. Visit the PANS Club website at www.pans-club.org for details. We currently have 10 meetings per year (August through May) with 2 months off during the summer. The Polish American Numismatic Society also plans a Christmas Oplatek Dinner during the Holiday Season. Meeting agendas include business matters and informative lectures from renowned guest speakers on topics including error and variety coins, significant coins in Polish history, Hamtramck scrip, coin photography. Open and lively member discussions about US and Polish numismatics are encouraged. Of course, the meeting would not be complete without coffee and delicious Polish pastries. The Polish American Numismatic Society hosts two very successful public coin show at the American Polish Cultural Center. Our primary show always takes place on the third Sunday of February. PANS also hosts a second show in August. Shows have been co-hosted with other clubs in the region. If you have any interest in numismatics, please attend a meeting and sign up as a member. PANS dues are only $20.00 per year or $30 per year if you would like the PANS Eaglet newsletter sent to your mail on a quarterly basis. PANS Club Membership is a great way to meet collectors with similar interests and knowledgeable dealers willing to share their experiences in a hobby that we all enjoy. To become a member-in-good-standing, plan to attend a minimum of 5 meetings per year and perform club-related duties at PANS Club sponsored Coin Shows.

Membership Application *I hereby make application for membership in the Polish American Numismatic Society, subject to the rules and regulations set forth in the Constitution and By-laws*.

SIGNATURE: _____

PRINT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE/ZIP: _____

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RECOMMENDED BY: _____

DATE ACCEPTED: _____

FIRST YEAR DUES PAID: _____

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Attend a meeting or mail to: PANS, PO BOX 80515, ROCHESTER, MI 48308